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ABSTRACT

Information gathered from various sources was directed toward identifying those areas where programs could be implemented and action taken to increase the enrollment and graduation of students, particularly the disadvantaged. The guiding model emphasized the factors affecting both a person's decision to enter a postsecondary school and his experience and successful completion of schooling. Results indicated that approximately two-thirds of the community youth planned to obtain further education, yet not as many actually enrolled due to indirect money costs, distance, and lack of familiarity. The percentage of disadvantaged who select themselves out of further education is slightly higher than the one-third overall rate. This group as a whole rated their motivation low, whereas Indian youth still retained an interest. One difference between those planning and not planning further schooling was the role played by the family as a source of information about the schools. Factors which advance the student toward graduation include satisfaction with progress, relevance of education, positive evaluation of school, and slightly higher high school grade point averages. (Sixteen tables are included.) (SC)

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TOWARD NEW OPPORTUNITIES

A STUDY OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION IN NORTHCENTRAL WISCONSIN

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

Prepared by

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A Report Of

PROJECT CROSSROADS-WISCONSIN

NICOLET COLLEGE
Rhinelander, Wisconsin 54501

A Cooperative Project of - - - -

North Central Technical Institute
University of Wisconsin - Marathon Center
University of Wisconsin - Medford Center
University of Wisconsin Extension
Nicolet College and Technical Institute

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FOREWORD

This report analyzes and describes research data compiled as an activity of Project Crossroads - Wisconsin. The Project, originally funded by the United States Office of Economic Opportunity, relates to a nine-county area in Northern Wisconsin and represents cooperative activities of Nicolet College and Technical Institute, North Central Technical Institute, The University of Wisconsin - Marathon Center, The University of Wisconsin - Medford Center and the University of Wisconsin Extension. The Project was concerned with the question: "How can technical institutes, two-year university centers, community colleges and university extension services more effectively respond to educational needs of residents in Northern Wisconsin?"

Dr. Eric S. Knowles, University of Wisconsin - Green Bay, served as a consultant to the Project through the various stages of its research activities. He was instrumental in the development of a research design and he conducted the analysis and reporting of the research results.

A description of the sampling procedures, included in the Appendix of this report, will be helpful to the reader. This section also identifies the various categories of respondents referred to throughout the report.

Two Research Summaries preceded the publication of this complete report of the study. Plans for institutional activity aimed at responding to the findings are being developed as this manuscript goes to press.

Richard J. Brown, Director
Nicolet College and Technical Institute

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PART 1

INTRODUCTION

Description of the population of Northcentral Wisconsin with special emphasis on Income and Education.

In 1970, the nine-county Northcentral Wisconsin region, composed of Forest, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Menominee, Oneida, Price, Taylor, and Vilas Counties, had a total population of 217,337, or about 4.92% of the residents of the State of Wisconsin. In comparison with the rest of the State, this region contains a higher proportion of economically and educationally disadvantaged.

Every county in the Northcentral Wisconsin region has a median family income *below* the state median of $10,068. Five of the nine counties have a median family income at least $3000 less than the state figure and as a whole average $1858 less than the state. The levels of poverty in this region are correspondingly higher than the state average. While 7.4% of the families in the State of Wisconsin are below the poverty level, 11.7% of the families in the Northcentral region are below the poverty level. Six of the nine counties have more than double the statewide level of poverty! These 1970 U.S. Census data document the fact that the region served by Project Crossroads-Wisconsin and its participating institutions contains a relatively high proportion of economically disadvantaged, as compared to the rest of the state.

American Indian populations constitute the most visible disadvantaged groups in the region. 3,937 American Indians were counted in the 1970 Census as residing in the Northcentral region. This is 1.81% of the regional population. It constitutes a proportion of American Indians that is five times higher than in the rest of the State of Wisconsin. While a vast majority of the American Indian populations reside in Menominee and Vilas Counties, five of the nine counties in the region have a proportion of American Indians higher than the state level.

In educational attainment, the 1970 U.S. Census data indicate that the region also averages below the state level. For people 25 years and older, the median school years of education is 11.3 for the region as compared to 12.1 for the state. Seven of the nine counties are below the state median while the other two counties match but do not exceed the state level. These data suggest that, while the level of education in the region is generally lower than

the rest of the state, there are a large number of people in the region who have the level of education necessary to enter post-secondary schooling.

TABLE 1

1970 CENSUS INFORMATION ON THE DISADVANTAGED OF THE NORTHCENTRAL WISCONSIN REGION

	Total Population	Median Family Income	Percent Less Than Poverty	Median School Years of Education		Number of Indians	Percent of Indians
				Males 25+	Females 25+		
Forest County	7,691	$6432	17.9	10.0	10.6	276	3.59
Langlade County	19,270	7111	15.6	10.2	11.9	139	0.72
Lincoln County	23,499	8290	8.6	10.0	11.7	27	0.11
Marathon County	97,457	9173	8.3	10.8	12.0	121	0.12
Menominee County	2,607	5768	34.0	10.0	10.7	2306	88.45
Oneida County	24,427	8197	9.8	12.1	12.2	127	0.52
Price County	14,520	6865	15.1	9.4	11.3	26	0.18
Taylor County	16,958	6980	17.4	8.9	10.5	10	0.07
Vilas County	10,958	6956	15.7	12.0	12.1	905	8.26
Northcentral Region	217,337	8210	11.3	11.3		3937	1.81
State of Wisconsin	4,417,731	10068	7.4	12.1		18924	0.43

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The information contained in this report reflects two overriding concerns which guided its gathering: (1) that data on any issue should be derived from multiple sources, and (2) that the issues researched should be directly related to possible action alternatives.

The information presented in this report was derived from a variety of sources. The 1970 Census provides background information concerning the nine-county region. Institutional records and publications provide information about the participating schools and their students. Direct surveys of students and former students provide additional information about the students as well as providing a glimpse of their experiences and desires for education. Surveys of various community populations, including samples of disadvantaged residents, provide information about the desires, incentives, and impediments to continuing their education. Such a variety of information sources is useful in two ways: (1) in some cases it provides a double-check or verification of information, and, perhaps more important, (2) it provides a variety of perspectives, from personal to institutional to regional, from which to view an issue. Thus, where possible in this report, an issue is investigated from several different perspectives, using information derived from several sources.

The questions asked in this research were guided by a concern for the kinds of programs that could be implemented to make postsecondary education more available to the disadvantaged. To be effective, such programs need to address the major causes or reasons why individuals, particularly the disadvantaged, are not receiving further education. Thus, to identify the areas of most effective action, information is needed about the reasons why people decide to enter and not to enter a college or technical institute.

A model of the personal and environmental forces influencing a person's entrance and graduation from a postsecondary institution served as a guide for collecting information. The first part of this model involves the factors that affect a person's decision to enroll in a school. The decision to enter a postsecondary institution requires these prior steps:

(1) The person must have the aspiration or motivation to obtain further education. An education must be seen as desirable and useful and personally relevant. Without the desire to obtain an education, enrollment will not occur.

(2) The person must perceive the opportunity for education as present and timely. There are several facets to this aspect; in part, it involves perception of self as ready and able to enter a post-secondary school. Additionally, a person may decide against enrolling if he feels that the costs of education outweigh its benefits.

(3) The person must have knowledge about particular institutions, their programs, and their availability. Schools become unavailable to people if the people don't know about them, or if the admissions requirements and institutional procedures systematically exclude them.

Each of these factors is essential to the decision to enroll in a postsecondary institution. If any are lacking, a person will not enter. Thus, information was collected from people in school and not in school to assess (1) the presence of these factors in present students, and (2) which of these factors differ between students and non-students.

Once enrolled in a school, the student becomes subject to a different set of forces. These forces are specifically related to the task of remaining a student through graduation. The second part of the model concerns the factors that affect a student's educational experience and aid or inhibit his staying in school. These factors are:

(1) The educational skills and preparatory training of the person. The skills and abilities of the person are related to how easily he will be able to accomplish his goals. A lack of preparation or ability will lead to frustration and withdrawal.

(2) The other demands on a person's time. Accomplishing educational objectives is in part dependent upon the amount of time and energy a person is able to spend in pursuit of those goals. If job, family, or personal demands become too strong, a person will not complete his educational program.

(3) Support and encouragement received from the institution. Schools have numerous support systems aimed at facilitating a student's education: financial aids, personal counseling, academic advising, housing and health services, recreational and extra-curricular activities, as well as remedial programs. The availability, quality, and use of these programs will affect a person's educational progress.

(4) The individual's evaluation of the quality and usefulness of his education. The extent to which a person enjoys, sees relevance in, and expects to benefit from his education are important forces

for remaining in an educational program.

Each of these factors affects the ease or difficulty of the educational progress from enrollment to graduation. Information about each of these factors was gathered from students and former students at each of the institutions as well as from the institutions themselves.

Thus, the overall model guiding this research emphasized (1) the factors affecting a person's decision to enter a postsecondary school, and (2) the factors affecting a person's experience and successful completion of postsecondary education. These two issues are the major questions which this report addresses. The data used to explore these issues come from a variety of sources. And, the information is directed toward identifying those areas where programs could be implemented and action taken to increase the enrollment and graduation of students, particularly the disadvantaged, of Northcentral Wisconsin.

A SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Interest in obtaining a postsecondary education is generally high among the community youth samples. Approximately two-thirds of the community youth stated that they planned at some time to obtain further education. Their rated motivation to attend a postsecondary school was as high as the motivation of students already enrolled in a school. Information from the present students suggests that this interest in further education is sponsored by concerns for better employment as well as for personal growth and development.

Approximately one-third of the community youth select themselves out of further schooling. This percentage is slightly higher for the disadvantaged youth. These community youth do not plan on any postsecondary education and, except for the Indian youth, rate their interest in further schooling as low. Thus, for these youth, non-attendance at a postsecondary school is volitional; they have no desire or interest at present for further schooling.

One difference between these youth and their contemporaries who did plan further education was in the role played by the family as a source of information about the schools. Youth planning on further education indicated that the family was an important source of knowledge about the schools; whereas youth planning not to attend indicated that the family was not an important source of knowledge. Whether a family has knowledge of postsecondary schools and provides this information to their

children is related to the high school graduate's and disadvantaged youth's interest in and plans for further education.

The Indian youth samples presented a pattern different from the high school graduates and disadvantaged youth. Indian youth who planned not to attend school still retained an interest in postsecondary education and a desire to attend that was equivalent to the Indian youth who did plan on attending. Factors other than motivation appear to be involved in the Indian youth's decision to enter a postsecondary school.

While two-thirds of the community youth express interest and plans for further education, it appears that fewer actually do enroll in school, at least immediately. If this is the case, it would indicate that there are forces impeding the entrance into postsecondary education; more is needed than the desire for education. Present students listed the indirect monetary costs of education—incurring expenses while not earning an income—and a variety of personal costs as the primary disadvantages of obtaining their education. A variety of data point to proximity as an important influence on the decision to enter school. Present students said that the fact that the school was close to home was important to their decision to attend. Also, information about the distance from the high school of origin to the postsecondary school indicates that a majority of the present students graduate from high schools within the immediate locality. These findings suggest that distance from a postsecondary school has a negative impact on the decision to enroll in school.

Evidence from the general community's knowledge of the individual postsecondary schools implies that familiarity with a school increases the likelihood of enrolling in that school. The schools that are most widely known in the region are those that draw a larger percentage of their student body from outside the immediate locality. Thus, proximity to a school and familiarity with a school appear to be two interrelated factors that increase the likelihood of enrolling in one of the Project Crossroads schools.

Once a student enrolls in school, a variety of factors may make the experience rewarding and ease his progression from entrance to completion. Comparisons between the present students and the sample of former students suggests some factors that may be related to the decision to terminate a postsecondary education. Former students, generally, were less satisfied with their educational progress, saw the education they received as less relevant to their desires, and gave a less positive evaluation of their school.

While the former students felt as prepared for postsecondary school as the present students, their high school grade point averages were slightly lower as were their postsecondary grade point averages. The former students were also more likely to make use of remedial education, and they appreciated it more. Thus, it appears that the former students were more likely to perform below the average of the present students. The former students, however, stated that it was no more difficult for them to attend school than for the present students and, if anything, fewer of the former students worked half-time or more while going to school.

Evidence about the educational experience of disadvantaged students who attend postsecondary schools suggest that it depends on the characteristics of the disadvantaged student and the character of the school he attend. At UW-Marathon Center, Nicolet College, and NCTI-Wausau, the disadvantaged students are similar to the advantaged students in preparation and performance and appear to have the same educational experience. At UW-Medford Center, the disadvantaged students are similar to the advantaged students in preparation and performance, but have a lower evaluation of their education and the school. At NCTI-Antigo, the disadvantaged students appear to be less prepared and perform more poorly than the advantaged students and to have a somewhat different educational experience—they received less academic advising than the advantaged students and tended to see their education as less relevant to their needs.

PART 2

THE DECISION TO ENTER POSTSECONDARY SCHOOL

Part 2 of this report is concerned with factors related to a person's decision to enroll in postsecondary education. In particular, this research looks at the motivational, cognitive, and social factors that differentiate people who have made the decision to enroll from those that have not yet enrolled. Several different kinds of comparisons are useful. The present students enrolled at each of the Project Crossroad schools provide information about the people who do enter a postsecondary school. To that extent, they serve as a criterion group where the level of motivation, the perceived opportunity for education, and the knowledge of schools was sufficient to lead to their enrolling.

Samples of community youth who are not yet enrolled in postsecondary education provide information about people at prior stages of the decision process. Comparisons between present students and community youth indicate the extent to which, and ways in which, students enrolled in postsecondary education are a different and more select sample of the general population. In addition to a random sample of high school graduates, two selected groups of community youth - Indian youth and disadvantaged youth - were sampled. Comparisons among these three community youth and between the community youth and the present students provide information about the disadvantaged populations of Northcentral Wisconsin and, in particular, the ways in which they differ from the students enrolled in postsecondary education.

Within each of the community samples, a differentiation can be made between youth who plan to attend a postsecondary school and youth who have no plans to attend. In addition to indicating the proportion of youth anticipating further education, this differentiation allows comparisons to be made between present students and community youth who intend to enroll. Differences between these two groups would provide information about factors other than motivation or desire that affect the decision to enroll in postsecondary education. These various comparisons, used singly and in combination, are used to discern the effects of aspirations for education, the perceived opportunity for education, and the knowledge of schools on the decision to enter postsecondary education.

ASPIRATIONS FOR EDUCATION

A person's decision to enter a postsecondary school and, in part, his decision to remain matriculated rests to a large extent on his determination of how important, desirable, and useful further education would be. Comparisons of the motivations or aspirations for education of present students, former students, and non-students address the following sorts of questions: (1) are people in school because they have higher levels of motivation and aspiration, (2) are aspirations for education supported by family, friends, and community, (3) are there significant portions of non-students who desire to be in a postsecondary school, and (4) why do students see further education as desirable? These questions address both the degree to which education is desired as well as the qualitative nature of the aspirations.

(1) *Interest in obtaining a postsecondary education.* All of the youth surveyed, student and non-student, were asked questions concerning their interest in obtaining a postsecondary education. People responded by indicating their degree of interest on a 7-point scale, where 1 = Not at all interested and 7 = Extremely interested. The questions and mean answers are presented in Table 2 (Aspirations for Education). Present students at each of the colleges and technical institutes gave uniformly high ratings, from $\overline{X}$ = 5.34 at UW-Medford to $\overline{X}$ = 5.89 at UW-Wausau, indicating as might be expected that students already enrolled in school have a high degree of interest and motivation for obtaining a post-secondary education.

Levels of motivation among former students were almost as high. Answers concerning the degree of interest in a postsecondary education revealed almost the same level among former students as among present students. However, a related question, asking to what degree the person was motivated to attend school showed slightly lower answers from the former students. This difference was more pronounced for NCTI where the present students rated their motivation (again on a 7-point scale) as $\overline{X}$ = 5.19 at NCTI-Wausau and $\overline{X}$ = 5.30 at NCTI-Antigo, whereas the former students rated their motivation at $\overline{X}$ = 4.41 (Antigo and Wausau combined). These differences between present and former students at NCTI may indicate either of two things: (1) the students with the lowest levels of motivation are more likely to withdraw from school, or (2) subsequent to withdrawing, the former student's motivation and interest in a postsecondary education decreases.

For the various community populations sampled, the degree of interest in a postsecondary education is lower on the average for the sample of high school graduates ($\bar{X}$ = 4.99) and the disadvantaged youth ($\bar{X}$ = 4.09), but not for the Indian youth ($\bar{X}$ = 5.77). These data suggest that, except for the Indian youth, the youth who do enroll in a postsecondary institution are the ones who have a higher degree of interest in and motivation for obtaining an education. This conclusion is clearly supported when the community youth who plan to enroll in school are compared to those who do not. Of the High School Graduates surveyed, those who stated that they planned to enroll in a postsecondary school rated their interest in obtaining a postsecondary education at $\bar{X}$ = 6.02; whereas those who had no plans for further education rated their interest as $\bar{X}$ = 2.81. Similar results were obtained from the Disadvantaged sample: those who planned further education rated their interest at $\bar{X}$ = 5.85 as compared to $\bar{X}$ = 1.56 for those planning no further education. These differences, however, were not as pronounced for the Indian youth. Indian youth planning further education rated their interest at $\bar{X}$ = 6.02; while those not planning further education rated their interest at $\bar{X}$ = 5.28.

Taken as a whole these findings suggest that aspirations and motivations for a postsecondary education are important determinants of both enrolling in a postsecondary school and planning to enroll. Interest in obtaining a postsecondary education is rated high by people who are already enrolled in school and those who plan on enrolling; interest is rated low by those who plan no further education. These findings tend to support a view of entrance into education as being largely volitional and dependent primarily upon the desire and interest of the individual. This conclusion does not seem to apply, at least to the same extent, for the Indian youth. The Indian youth indicate a relatively high level of interest in postsecondary education, even if they have no immediate plans for further education. This finding might suggest that factors other than volition are central to the Indian youth's plans to enter a postsecondary school.

(2) *Family and community support for educational aspirations.* All of the questionnaires and interviews administered to students, former students, and community youth asked a series of questions concerning the degree to which the family and community felt that education is important. Each respondent was asked how he thought his parents, siblings, friends, high school teachers and counselors, and his community in general felt about his continuing

TABLE 2

ASPIRATIONS FOR EDUCATION

Sample	n	Interest in Postsecondary Education (1=low,7=high)	Motivation to go to School (1=low,7=high)	How do the following feel about you continuing your education? (1=not important, 7=extremely important) Parents	Siblings	Friends	High School	Community
Present Students:								
UW-Wausau	130	5.89	5.25	5.68	5.20	4.89	5.21	4.36
UW-Medford	53	5.34	5.09	5.86	5.10	4.71	5.71	4.33
Nicolet	145	5.63	5.40	5.81	4.95	4.77	5.18	4.20
NCTI-Wausau	635	5.77	5.19	5.96	5.09	4.94	5.52	4.60
NCTI-Antigo	77	5.56	5.30	6.23	5.35	5.07	5.59	4.67
Former Students:								
All	55	5.45	4.76	6.31	5.54	5.24	5.87	4.96
UW-Wausau	9	6.00	5.11	6.78	6.33	5.78	6.44	6.00
UW-Medford	8	4.88	5.25	5.13	4.38	5.00	4.57	3.86
Nicolet	11	5.91	5.00	6.36	5.00	5.00	5.10	5.10
NCTI	27	5.26	4.41	6.48	5.81	5.22	6.31	4.89
High School Graduates:								
All	84	4.99	--	6.02	5.49	5.19	5.86	5.08
Planning to Attend	57	6.02	--	6.54	5.86	5.49	6.28	5.33
No Plans to Attend	27	2.81	--	4.88	4.62	4.54	4.92	4.54
Disadvantaged Youth:								
All	22	4.09	--	5.64	5.05	4.76	5.82	5.14
Planning to Attend	13	5.85	--	6.08	5.42	5.25	5.92	5.46
No Plans to Attend	9	1.56	--	5.00	4.56	4.11	5.67	4.67
Indian Youth:								
All	73	5.77	--	6.05	5.40	5.12	5.26	4.81
Planning to Attend	48	6.02	--	6.44	5.21	5.10	5.48	5.02
No Plans to Attend	25	5.32	--	5.32	5.76	5.16	4.84	4.37

his education. Answers, reported on a 7-point scale (from 1 = not important to 7 = extremely important), are reported in Table 2 (Asperations for education).

In general, all of the youth surveyed perceived the climate of opinion in their homes and communities as favorable to further education. Parents and high school counselors and teachers were seen as attaching a great deal of importance to postsecondary education. Siblings and friends, though somewhat iower, were still perceived as thinking education was important; while the community in general was perceived as feeling that further education was moderately important. This pattern of results was essentially the same for all the samples. However, the community youth who planned not to attend a postsecondary school did perceive the family and community support of education as slightly lower. Yet, even these individuals rated their family, friends, and community as feeling that further education was important.

(3) *Plans to attend a postsecondary school.* In all of the non-student samples surveyed, a high proportion of the respondents reported that they had plans to enter a postsecondary school. These data are presented in Table 3 (Plans to attend a post-secondary school). Among the former students surveyed, 58.2% indicated that they would enroll in another two or four-year school. 67.9% of the High School Graduates, 67.1% of the Indian youth, and 59.1% of the Disadvantaged youth indicated that they were planning to obtain further education at a two or four-year school.

Although it is difficult to document, these percentages appear to be higher than the percentages of young adults who actually do enroll in postsecondary education. For instance, the 1970 U.S. Census reports that 12.4% of the 18 to 24 year olds in the nine county region attended a college (this particular classification excludes vocational and technical education). Whereas, from the samples interviewed, approximately 20% of the former students, 33.4% of the High School Graduates, 26% of the Indian youth, and 13.6% of the Disadvantaged youth indicated plans to attend Nicolet College, UW-Wausau, UW-Medford, or a four-year college. It would appear that the number of people who desire and state an intention to enter a college and, probably, a vocational or technical school is much higher than the number who actually do enroll.

It is interesting to note that when parents of various community youth are asked about the educational intentions of their children, they report a lower percentage who are planning to enroll than the

youth themselves do. The parents stated that 54.7% of the High School Graduates, 56.0% of the Disadvantaged youth, and 34.4% of the Indian youth were planning to enter school. The corresponding percentages for the youth themselves were 67.9%, 59.1%, and 67.1% respectively. It should be remembered in evaluating these figures that the parent sample, particularly for Indians, included parents whose children were not included in the youth sample. Even with this proviso, it seems clear that the youth are giving higher likelihood to their attendance at postsecondary education than are the parents. This difference, perhaps, reflects the fact that the youth answered this question more according to their desires and interests than according to definite plans which had been discussed with their parents and toward which action had been initiated.

In general, these results corroborate the findings in the above sections, that the aspirations and motivations for postsecondary education are relatively high. However, if the percentage of youth who report plans to further their education is, in fact, higher than the number who actually do enroll in a postsecondary school, then it seems reasonable to conclude: (1) that there are a number of youth in the region that have the aspiration and motivation to attend school, but are not doing so, and (2) that there are other factors than lack of motivation or aspiration preventing these youth from entering a postsecondary school.

(4) *Advantages of a postsecondary education.* As the prior sections indicate, the level of motivation for a postsecondary education is generally high among the samples. It is relevant to ask *why* students aspire to further education; that is, what goals are they pursuing, what advantages do they believe education will bring? The present students at each of the Project Crossroad schools were asked to "list the major advantages of obtaining a post-high school education." (Comparable data were not obtained from the samples of former students or community residents. Consequently this discussion is limited to the advantages seen by students already enrolled in a postsecondary school.) Six spaces were provided for their written answers. The written responses were then sorted according to content into three inductively derived categories: (1) *Personal Development* includes advantages that refer to individual growth and maturation, generally unrelated to the specific educational mission of the schools, (2) *Intellectual Development* includes advantages that refer specifically to education, learning, and the academic mission of the school, and (3) *Employment Development* includes advantages that refer to future

TABLE 3

PLANS TO ATTEND A POSTSECONDARY SCHOOL

FORMER STUDENTS

	Definitely or probably not	Attend the same school	Attend another school	Attend, but don't know where
All Former Students (55)	41.8%	16.4%	20.0%	21.8%
UW-Wausau (9)	22.2	11.1	66.7	0
UW-Medford (8)	62.5	0	0	37.5
Nicolet (11)	36.4	36.4	18.2	9.1
NCTI (27)	44.4	14.8	11.1	29.6

COMMUNITY YOUTH

According to youth:	Planning not to attend	Attend UW-Wau	Attend UW-Med	Attend Nicolet	Attend NCTI-W	Attend NCTI-A	Attend other 2-year	Attend other 4-year	Don't know where
High School Graduates (84)	32.1%	1.2%	0%	4.8%	15.5%	2.4%	10.7%	27.4%	6.0%
Disadvantaged youth (22)	40.9	0	0	9.1	9.1	0	18.2	4.5	18.2
Indian youth (73)	32.9	0	0	6.8	6.8	12.3	8.2	19.2	2.7
According to parents:									
High School Graduates (86)	45.3%	2.3%	1.2%	9.3%	10.5%	9.3%	1.2%	3.5%	17.5%
Disadvantaged youth (25)	44.0	0	0	12.0	8.0	8.0	4.0	0	24.0
Indian youth (131)	65.6	0	0	4.6	7.6	9.9	1.5	3.1	7.7

Note: The community parents surveyed were not always parents of the particular youth surveyed. In some cases, particularly among the Indian samples, parents were interviewed without their sons or daughters being interviewed.

employability, status, or wealth that is contingent upon receiving a higher education. The percent of responses for each category from present students at each school are presented in Table 4 (Advantages of a postsecondary education).

TABLE 4

ADVANTAGES OF A POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

	Present students				
	UW Wausau	UW Medford	Nicolet College	NCTI Wausau	NCTI Antigo
Personal Development - "learn about people, have new experiences, develop socially, brings out individuality, expands interests, chance to be on own, more awareness, broader view of life, grow up."	43.0%	37.5%	31.3%	28.9%	27.6%
Intellectual Development - "become more educated, better informed, chance to learn from teachers, needed for higher education, learn how to learn."	13.5%	25.9%	21.5%	12.1%	17.9%
Employment Development - "better job opportunity, obtain a skill, more money, become qualified, better chance for employment."	43.5%	36.6%	47.2%	59.0%	54.5%
Average number of responses per student	2.05	2.13	1.60	1.82	2.03

Overall, employment development was most frequently mentioned as an advantage of a postsecondary education. Personal Development was second most commonly mentioned and intellectual development was third. There were, however, some differences between students at each of the schools. Students at NCTI Wausau and Antigo mentioned employment advantages over half the time, more than twice as frequently as either of the other two categories. The same general pattern occurred among Nicolet College students; almost half of the advantages mentioned concerned employment development, slightly less than a third mentioned personal development, and about one-fifth concerned intellectual development. Students at UW-Wausau and UW-Medford mentioned personal development and employment development with equal frequency.

Present students at these schools talked about the advantages of a postsecondary education, first, in terms of improved job opportunities, greater pay, and higher status it can bring. Second, and for UW-Wausau and UW-Medford students, equally, they mentioned advantages of individual growth and development as persons. Third, and least mentioned, were advantages directly related to the academic and intellectual development of the individual.

These advantages and the frequency with which they were mentioned may be taken as an indication of the motivating forces underlying the aspirations for postsecondary education. Employability and personal development were the most frequently mentioned reasons for obtaining further education.

PERCEIVED OPPORTUNITY FOR EDUCATION

While aspirations for education may be present, an individual may still decide not to enroll in further education for a variety of personal reasons. He may not perceive the opportunity for education as being present or timely or he may feel that the direct and indirect costs of obtaining an education are prohibitive. While these subjective factors are difficult to assess, some data are available which bear at least indirectly on the situational and personal forces affecting the decision to enter a postsecondary school. In particular, the samples of students and non-students can be compared for the factors, other than motivation, that affect their decision to enter school and the nature of the disadvantages to education that they perceive.

(1) *Factors important in the decision to attend school.* Individuals who were presently attending one of the postsecondary schools or who were planning on attending some postsecondary school were asked to rate the importance of seven different factors which might have influenced their decision to attend. The mean of the importance ratings for each of these factors is presented in Table 5 (Factors Important in the Decision to Attend School). The pattern of influences on the decision to enter school varied for each of the samples.

UW-Wausau. Students enrolled at UW-Wausau rated the school being close to home as the factor most important to their decision to enter school. Thus, proximity to the school is rated as a very important determinant of their decision to enroll. The low cost of education and the school offering the courses the student wants were rated as moderately important. Of the factors listed, being counseled to attend UW-Wausau is of least importance as an influence on the decision to enter school. Thus, a pattern emerges of the reasons why students decide to attend UW-Wausau; they do so primarily because the school is close to home, and secondarily because the education is inexpensive and offers the courses they want.

UW-Medford. Students at UW-Medford indicated that proximity to the school and the relatively low cost of education were fairly important determinants of their decision to attend school. However, none of the alternatives listed was rated as extremely important. Least important of the reasons was that the person had been counseled to attend UW-Medford. Although rated fairly low in importance, Students at UW-Medford said that receiving financial aid had more influence on their decision to attend than did students at other schools. The fact that the school offered the courses they wanted was rated as being only moderately important for UW-Medford students, whereas this factor received generally higher ratings at the other schools. Thus, students decide to attend UW-Medford primarily because of its proximity and inexpensiveness, and to some extent because it offers the courses they want.

Nicolet College and Technical Institute. Students at Nicolet rated the inexpensiveness of education as the most important determinant of their decision to attend school. Second, and also very important, is the proximity of the school to their home. Third, and also fairly important is the fact that the school offers the courses the student wants. Being counseled to attend school and receiving financial aid were rated as the factors least important to their decision to attend Nicolet.

North Central Technical Institute. Both NCTI-Wausau and NCTI-Antigo students indicated very similar reasons for deciding to enroll in school. The most important reason in both cases was that the school offered the courses that the student wanted. This reason was rated higher at NCTI than at any of the other schools, with Nicolet College and Technical Institute being next highest. These high ratings probably reflect the more specific education at the technical institutes and the fact that students enter these schools with more specific goals and desired programs of study. The inexpensiveness of education as well as the proximity of the school were also rated as moderately important for the decision to enter school. However, proximity was less of a factor for the NCTI students than for students at the other schools. Perhaps students are willing to travel a bit further from home to attend NCTI than to attend the other schools. Students at NCTI-Antigo, more than any other school, rated the fact that they were counseled to attend school as important, though it is of only moderate importance. This finding suggests either that the students at NCTI-Antigo are more likely to receive educational counseling or that High School counselors were more likely to direct students toward NCTI-Antigo than the other schools.

For all of the present students the proximity of school and home, the inexpensiveness of education and the desired curriculum represent the three most important reasons for deciding to attend school. The parents' desire for the student to attend college and the fact that friends attend the school are of some importance. Generally, the receipt of financial aid and guidance of high school counselors are of very slight importance. However, within this general pattern, there are differences among the various schools. UW-Wausau and UW-Medford students rate proximity as most important; Nicolet students rate the inexpense of education as most important; and NCTI students rate the curriculum as most important.

Among the various non-student samples, youth who stated an intention of attending a postsecondary school were also asked to rate the extent to which these seven factors were important to their decision to enroll. These community youth indicated a somewhat different pattern of reasons for their decision to attend school.

Community Youth. The 67.9% of the High School Graduates, 59.1% of the Disadvantaged youth and 67.1% of the Indian youth who planned to enter a postsecondary school were similar to each other in their pattern of answers. These potential students stated

TABLE 5

FACTORS IMPORTANT IN THE DECISION TO ATTEND SCHOOL

	Present Students					Community Youth Who Plan to Attend		
Factors	UW-Wausau	UW-Medford	Nicolet	NCTI Wausau	NCTI Antigo	High School Graduates	Disad-vantaged	Indian
(Number of responses)	(130)	(53)	(145)	(635)	(77)	(57)	(13)	(48)
School is close to home	6.03	5.21	5.56	4.38	4.22	3.82	2.92	3.40
Many friends go here	3.16	2.83	2.94	2.59	2.57	2.91	2.92	3.22
Parents want me to attend	3.64	3.47	3.09	2.92	3.28	3.79	4.00	4.22
Received financial aid	2.13	3.13	2.23	2.10	3.16	3.02	3.18	3.53
Education inexpensive	4.61	4.92	5.90	4.73	4.06	3.72	3.50	4.16
School offers courses I want	4.16	3.83	4.93	5.43	5.28	5.71	5.92	4.60
I was counseled to attend	1.94	2.23	2.26	2.33	3.56	3.18	3.15	3.13

Note: Questions were answered on a 7-point scale where 1 = Not Important and 7 = Extremely Important. The figures presented in the table are the mean answer for each sample.

that the most important reason for their decision to enter school was that the school offers the courses they want. Their secondary reasons were that their parents wanted them to attend school and that the education was inexpensive. For the High School Graduates in this group, the proximity of the school also appeared as a secondary, though only moderately important reason. Generally, however, the proximity of the school was rated lower by the community youth than it was by the present students. Friends attending school, receiving financial aid, and being counseled to attend school were generally minor factors in their decision to attend school.

Summary. The pattern of influences on the decision to attend school varies slightly according to the school and the sample. However, some general conclusions can be drawn from this information.

Proximity to the school is a factor that seems to differentiate the present students from the samples of community youth. It is clear that the present students feel that they attend school largely because the school is close at hand. When the sample of High School Graduates is separated into those who plan to attend Project Crossroad schools and those who plan to attend other schools, this difference is maintained. High School Graduates who plan to attend Project Crossroad schools rate proximity of the school as very important ($\bar{X}$ = 5.35); whereas Graduates who plan to attend other schools rate proximity as much less important ($\bar{X}$ = 3.15). While it seems reasonable that students planning to attend schools outside of the Project Crossroads area would rate proximity low, since they would probably be unable to live at home, it is still of interest that proximity remains as a primary reason why students attend and plan to attend Project Crossroad schools.

It is conceivable that proximity to a school could be seen as fortuitous but not a major reason for attending that school. This, however, does not appear to be the case for Project Crossroad schools. Living close to one of the Project Crossroad schools is a major reason for attending. Perhaps proximity does play a major role in determining who will attend Project Crossroad schools. Proximity to a school may make attendance much easier and distance from a school may act as an impediment to attending. Potential students who live relatively far away from a school may have to have higher levels of motivation and be willing to encounter higher direct and indirect costs to obtain an education.

There is some evidence in the information discussed that the importance of desired courses may be related to obtaining

vocational-technical education. NCTI students rated this factor higher than did UW-Medford and UW-Wausau students. The specific skill and job oriented programs offered at the technical schools may provide stronger, more clearly visible educational objectives and end-points. These clearer objectives may allow individuals to more accurately assess whether the educational program is consonant with their personal goals. Someone who wants to become a forester can rather easily choose a school based on whether it offers a degree in forestry. At two-year colleges, both the programs of study and the educational objectives are more general and long term and less dependent on specific courses. Thus, other factors than the course of instruction become important in a person's decision to attend a two-year college. The data provide some support for this interpretation in that proximity and parental desires tend to be rated as more important factors among students at the two-year colleges than among students at NCTI.

(2) *Location of High School of Origin.* The question of what role living close to a school plays in a person's decision to enter that school can be investigated further, but with a different sort of data. The High School of origin provides an indication of the places from which the students come. Enrollment records for the Spring of 1972 were obtained from each of the five Project Crossroads colleges and technical institutes. The high schools of origin were counted and categorized according to proximity of the high school to the college or technical institute. These data, reported as percentages of students whose high schools were identified, are presented in Table 6 (Location of high school of origin).

It should be noted that the high school of origin probably underestimates the extent to which students come from the local area. People who, subsequent to high school graduation, move into the local area and then enroll in school would appear with this index to be non-local students when, in fact, their permanent residence was local. This problem would be accentuated in cases, such as Nicolet College, where the student body contains a large number of older, returning students.

The five Project Crossroad schools differ somewhat in the extent to which they draw students from the local area. UW-Wausau and UW-Medford have the highest proportion of students coming from the local city and from the surrounding areas. NCTI-Wausau and NCTI-Antigo have the fewest students coming from the local city. The Nicolet College data is likely to be somewhat unrepresentative of the proportion of local students due to the

TABLE 6

LOCATION OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATED FROM

Present students at:	(Number of Students Counted)	Percent of Students from: Local City	Within a 20 mile Radius	Within a 30 mile Radius	Outside a 30 mile Radius	Percent of Students Older than 30 years
UW-Wausau	(571)	62.3	79.7	82.8	17.2	5.4
UW-Medford	(111)	48.6	63.1	74.8	25.2	7.5
Nicolet College	(605)	36.5	54.0	68.6	31.4	21.0
NCTI-Wausau	(995)	31.3	53.4	64.5	35.5	2.9*
NCTI-Antigo	(79)	38.0	44.3	70.9	29.1	3.9*

* Estimated from age distribution of present students sampled

fact that 21% of the student body is over the age of 30. The two schools in Wausau provide a stark contrast. Whereas 62.3% of the UW-Wausau students come from Wausau, only 31.3% of the NCTI-Wausau students come from the local city. Eighty percent of the UW-Wausau students come from high schools located within a 20-mile radius of the school.

Generally, these percentages indicate that students enrolled in the Project Crossroads schools come largely from the local area. This generalization is more true for UW-Wausau and UW-Medford, where three-fourths of the student body come from high schools located within a 30-mile radius, than it does for NCTI, where two-thirds of the student body come from high schools located within a 30-mile radius. These data complement the rated importance of proximity reported in the previous section. Students at UW-Wausau and UW-Medford rated proximity to the school as more important to their decision to attend school than did students at NCTI-Wausau and NCTI-Antigo. Proximity to the school, it appears, is an important factor in students' decisions to attend school, especially UW-Wausau and UW-Medford. In addition to students stating that this is an important factor, the data reported in this section indicate that a large majority of the student bodies come from proximal areas. These data suggest that the perceived opportunity for education, if not the actual opportunity, is related to the proximity of the person to the school.

(3) *Perceived costs of education.* In part the decision to enroll in a postsecondary school can be seen as a process where the relative advantages are weighed against the relative costs, both direct and indirect, of obtaining further education. Each of the present students at the five Project Crossroads schools was asked an open-ended question aimed at assessing the perceived costs of education; students were asked to "list the major disadvantages of obtaining post-high school education." (Comparable data were not obtained from the samples of former students or community residents. Consequently, this discussion is limited to the disadvantages seen by students already enrolled in a postsecondary school.) Six spaces were provided for their written answers.

The obtained responses were sorted according to content into four inductively derived categories: (1) *Monetary Expense* includes disadvantages directly referring to financial difficulties encountered while attending school, (2) *Time Expense* includes disadvantages related to opportunity costs, not being able to do something else because of the time spent on education, (3) *Job Insecurity* includes references to the possibility that further

TABLE 7

DISADVANTAGES OF A POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

	Present Students				
	UW Wausau	UW Medford	Nicolet College	NCTI Wausau	NCTI Antigo
Monetary Expense - "lack of money, financial difficulties, hard to find part time job, spending when you aren't making money, costs a lot."	34.3%	29.9%	50.7%	44.2%	24.3%
Time Expense - "six years more of education, loss of time on job, postpone career, prolongs period of dependence, no free time."	20.0%	14.9%	10.7%	19.3%	5.4%
Job Insecurity - "may not lead to better job, poor job market, have to wait to get a job, may become overspecialized, no jobs anyway."	9.3%	17.9%	13.3%	14.2%	16.2%
Personal Costs - "bored, poor teachers, too many pressures, might never use education, get too smart, keeps you a school kid, distance from home, stress and tension."	36.4%	37.3%	25.3%	22.3%	54.1%
Average number of responses per student	1.35	1.15	1.09	1.21	2.70

education may not "pay off" in terms of leading to a better, higher paying job, and (4) *Personal Costs* includes disadvantages referring to boredom, pressure, stress or other individual costs of attending a postsecondary school. The percent of responses in each category from present students are presented in Table 7 (Disadvantages of a Postsecondary Education).

The frequency of each category of answer varies quite widely from school to school. Students at UW-Wausau and UW-Medford most frequently mentioned personal costs. Monetary expense is a fairly close second. Students at Nicolet College and at NCTI-Wausau mentioned the monetary expense of education most frequently. Students at NCTI-Antigo listed personal costs over fifty percent of the time. Overall, the monetary expense involved in attending school and various personal disadvantages were mentioned as the major perceived costs of obtaining a postsecondary education.

For most of the Project Crossroad schools, the present students were able to think of more advantages than disadvantages of obtaining a postsecondary education. The average number of advantages per student and the average number of disadvantages per student were 2.05 and 1.35 respectively at UW-Wausau, 2.13 and 1.15 respectively at UW-Medford, 1.60 and 1.09 respectively at Nicolet College, and 1.82 and 1.21 at NCTI-Wausau. NCTI-Antigo, averaging 2.03 advantages and 2.70 disadvantages per student, was the only exception to this pattern. Thus, while students were able to list a variety of costs involved in obtaining a postsecondary education, they were generally able to list a greater number of benefits.

KNOWLEDGE OF SCHOOLS

While youth in a community may have aspirations for further education and perceive the opportunity for education as present, an additional factor of knowledge about the programs, requirements, and character of particular schools would seem to be necessary before students enroll in school. In a sense, this factor is related to the perceived opportunity for education, for it refers to the specific knowledge that students have about the schools and programs. At the very least, schools that are unknown to a person are *de facto* unavailable, and, at the most, the more knowledge a person has about a school, the easier and less threatening it may be to enroll. In the present study, various community samples were queried about their knowledge of the postsecondary schools in the

Project Crossroads area. This information indicates the relative visibility of the Project Crossroads schools. In addition, each of the samples of students and community youth was asked about the sources of their information about the school they attended or know most about. Together these data indicate which schools people know about and how they obtained this information.

(1) *Knowledge of individual schools.* During the interviews with community samples, both youth and parents were asked about their knowledge of the educational institutions participating in Project Crossroads. In particular, they were asked to scan a list of schools including Nicolet College, NCTI-Wausau, NCTI-Antigo, US-Wausau, UW-Medford, and UW-Extension and indicate which one they knew most about. The results presented in Table 8 (Community Knowledge of Postsecondary Schools) give the percentage of each sample who stated they knew most about each school.

Among High School Graduates and their parents, NCTI-Wausau was the most frequently mentioned school followed by Nicolet College, with NCTI-Antigo third. Very few people in these samples knew most about UW-Wausau, UW-Medford, or UW-Extension. The Indian youth and parents presented a similar pattern except that NCTI-Antigo replaced NCTI-Wausau as the best known school, Nicolet College was second, and NCTI-Wausau was third. Again, UW-Wausau, UW-Medford, and UW-Extension were best known by only a very small proportion of the Indian samples.

The Disadvantaged samples presented a slightly different pattern. The Disadvantaged youth knew most about NCTI-Wausau, followed not very closely by Nicolet College and NCTI-Antigo. The Disadvantaged parents, on the other hand, knew most about Nicolet College, followed by NCTI-Wausau, NCTI-Antigo, and UW-Extension.

(The High School Graduate samples were obtained from 9 randomly selected high schools in the area: Antigo, Athens, Edgar, Medford, Merrill, Minocqua, Phillips, Rhinelander, and Wabeno. While these towns are fairly widely distributed throughout the region, their proximity to the various schools will affect the percentages reported here. For instance, the percent knowing most about UW-Medford and Nicolet College may have been lower if Medford and Rhinelander had not been selected for the sample. However, the substantial differences between UW-Wausau and NCTI-Wausau would be unaffected by the proximity of the sampled high schools and indicate that there are reliable differ-

TABLE 8

COMMUNITY KNOWLEDGE OF POSTSECONDARY SCHOOLS

	Percent knowing most about:						
	UW Wausau	UW Medford	Nicolet	NCTI Wausau	NCTI Antigo	UW Extension	(Number of (Respondents)
High School Graduates:							
Youth	7.1	4.8	25.0	41.7	17.9	3.6	(84)
Parents	8.1	10.5	27.9	34.9	13.1	9.3	(86)
Indian:							
Youth	5.5	1.4	38.3	15.0	41.1	2.8	(73)
Parents	0	0	26.0	17.5	36.7	8.4	(131)
Disadvantaged:							
Youth	0	9.1	18.2	54.5	13.6	4.5	(22)
Parents	4.0	4.0	37.0	24.0	20.0	20.0	(25)

Note: Rows may sum to more than 100% due to some people mentioning two schools, or may sum to less than 100% due to some people not mentioning any of the schools.

ences in the knowledge of the various schools represented in this data.)

From this information, it appears that the community samples are most familiar with the technical institutes in the area, generally with NCTI-Wausau. The Indian samples, however, are more familiar with NCTI-Antigo than with NCTI-Wausau. Nicolet College appears in each of the samples as the second best known school in the region. UW-Extension is best known by 20.0% of the Disadvantaged parents, but by a much smaller percentage of the other samples. Finally, UW-Wausau and UW-Medford are best known by only a very few people in each sample.

(2) *Sources of knowledge about schools.* How do people find out about the schools they attend or know most about? Answers to this question may reveal differences among schools and samples in the sources of information students and potential students have available. Samples of present students, former students, and community youth were asked to indicate how important for them six sources of information were in finding out about the school they attended or knew most about: The six sources of information were: (a) high school counselors and teachers, (b) recruiters from this school, (c) publicity about this school, (d) someone who was a student here, (e) family, and (f) friends. The ratings were made on a seven-point scale where 1 = Not at all important and 7 = Extremely important. The mean answers, reported in Table 9 (Sources of Knowledge About Schools), reveal some differences between the various samples.

Present students. Generally, the present students rated social contacts - family, a student at the school, and friends - as the most important sources of information about the school. The family is generally the most important source of information, except for UW-Wausau students who placed a student at the school as the most important. The formal channels of information — high school counselors, school recruiters, and publicity about the school — received somewhat lower ratings, with several exceptions. Students at UW-Medford indicated that school recruiters were a moderately important source of information, as important as the family. Students at Nicolet College rated publicity about the school as an important source of information. These variations may reflect particular practices of these schools.

Former students. Since the number of former students sampled from each of the schools was quite small and the pattern of answers from these subsamples were quite similar, the data are

grouped for all former students. The former students presented a slightly different pattern of results than did the present students. Former students rated the family as a slightly less important source of information and rated high school counselors and teachers as a more important source of information about the school. In fact, high school personnel were rated as the most important source of information about the school by former students.

Community youth who plan to attend school. The samples of High School Graduates, Disadvantaged youth, and Indian youth who stated that they planned to attend a postsecondary school rated the high school counselors and teachers and the family as the two most important sources of information about the school. However, they generally gave higher ratings than the present students to each of the sources of information. School recruiters were the least important source of information, but all the rest were of moderate importance. Perhaps these higher ratings reflect the fact that these intending students are still actively searching for information about the schools in which they plan to enroll.

Community youth who do not plan to attend school. Among the community youth who plan no further schooling, the Indian youth present a pattern of ratings that is different from the High School Graduates and Disadvantaged youth. The Indian youth who plan no further education cite sources of information that are very similar to the Indian youth who do plan to attend school. The family is rated as the most important source of information; while friends and High School counselors are rated as moderately important. However, the High School Graduates and Disadvantaged youth planning no further education present a pattern of ratings very different from their counterparts who do plan to attend school. High school counselors are rated as the most important source of information; while family and, to some extent, friends are rated as *unimportant* sources of information.

Summary. The family as a source of information about the schools appears to differentiate between the students who are in school or intend to enroll in school and the youth who plan no further education. The High School graduates and disadvantaged youth who plan not to attend school rated the family as the least important source of information. These findings lead to rather serious conclusions about who goes to school. Youth whose family is able to provide information about a school are more likely to enter or plan to enter school. Youth whose parents are unable to provide information about a school are likely not to enter school.

TABLE 9

SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT SCHOOLS

How did you find out about the school you attend or know most about?
(1 = not at all important; 7 = extremely important)

Samples	High School Counselors	School Recruiters	Publicity about School	Student at School	Family	Friends
Present Students:						
UW-Wausau	3.19	2.09	3.05	4.15	3.54	3.37
UW-Medford	2.74	3.98	3.13	3.37	4.00	3.49
Nicolet	2.88	2.74	4.09	3.51	4.17	3.29
NCTI-Wausau	3.68	2.56	3.48	3.75	4.11	3.72
NCTI-Antigo	3.19	2.92	3.09	3.55	4.43	4.04
Former Students:						
All Former Students	4.33	2.57	3.45	3.94	3.57	3.26
Community Youth who plan to attend school:						
High School Graduates	4.92	3.18	3.98	3.92	4.14	3.98
Disadvantaged Youth	5.00	3.08	3.54	3.69	4.54	3.92
Indian Youth	4.15	3.24	3.11	4.39	5.54	4.35
Community Youth who do not plan to attend school:						
High School Graduates	4.76	3.67	4.00	3.52	2.76	3.38
Disadvantaged Youth	6.00	2.50	2.88	3.12	1.50	2.25
Indian Youth	4.46	3.12	3.38	3.75	5.71	5.00

The knowledge and awareness of the parents, then, appear to be related to the son's or daughter's decision to enter school or not. This relationship does not, however, seem to hold for Indian youth. Their decision to enter school appears unrelated to the importance of the parents as a source of information about schools.

The high school counselors and teachers are seen as a more important source of information by non-students than by present students. This difference may be subject to several interpretations. It is possible that youth who rely most heavily on high school personnel as sources of information may be less likely to eventually enroll in or remain in school. That is, youth who enter school and remain in school are those who obtain information from important other sources. However, it is also possible that present

students rate high school counselors lower because they are further removed in time from the counseling situation and consequently remember it less potently as a source of information. While this difference between non-students and present students appears to be fairly consistent, there is no data in the present study which will distinguish between various interpretations of this finding.

SUMMARY: THE DECISION TO ENTER A POSTSECONDARY SCHOOL

The data presented in the previous sections suggest that interest in obtaining a postsecondary education is generally high among the community youth sampled. Approximately two-thirds of the community youth stated that they planned at some time to obtain further education. Their rated motivation to attend a postsecondary school was as high as the motivation of students already enrolled in a school. Information from the present students suggests that this interest in further education is sponsored by concerns for better employment as well as for personal growth and development.

Approximately one-third of the community youth select themselves out of further schooling. This percentage is slightly higher for the disadvantaged youth. These community youth do not plan on any postsecondary education and, except for the Indian youth, rate their interest in further schooling as low. Thus, for 32% of the high school graduates and 41% of the disadvantaged youth, non-attendance at a postsecondary school is volitional; they have no desire or interest at present for further schooling. One difference between these youth and their contemporaries who did plan further education was the in role played by the family as a source of information about the schools. Youth planning on further education indicated that the family was an important source of knowledge about schools, whereas youth planning not to attend indicated that the family was not an important source of knowledge. Whether the family has knowledge of postsecondary schools and provides this information to their children is related to the high school graduate's and disadvantaged youth's interest in and plans for further education.

The Indian youth sampled presented a pattern different from the high school graduates and disadvantaged youth. While approximately one-third of the Indian youth said they planned no further education, they indicated an interest in further education equal to

their contemporaries who did plan to attend and equal to students already enrolled in school. The family was also an important source of information to all Indian youth, including those who planned no further education. Thus, interest in further education and a desire to attend school does not seem to differentiate the Indian youth who plan to attend school from those who don't. Factors other than motivation appear to be involved in the Indian youth's decision to enter a postsecondary school.

While two-thirds of the community youth express interest and plans for further education, it appears that fewer actually do enroll in school, especially in the immediate future. This would suggest two things: (1) that there are youth in the region who desire a postsecondary education but are not enrolled in school, and (2) that there must be forces impeding their entrance into a postsecondary school. Present students listed the indirect monetary costs of education—incurring living expenses while not having a suitable income—and a variety of personal costs, inconveniences, and dissatisfactions as the primary disadvantages of continuing their education.

A variety of data point to proximity as an important influence on the decision to enter school. Present students, particularly at UW-Wausau and UW-Medford, rated this factor—the fact that the school was close to home—as important to their decision. Also, information about the distance from the high school of origin to the postsecondary school indicates that a majority of the present students graduate from high schools within the immediate locality. This relationship is more pronounced among the colleges than among the technical institutes. These findings suggest that distance from a postsecondary school has a negative impact on the decision to enroll in school. Distance from a school, of course, would increase the major perceived disadvantages of education: higher indirect expenses and greater personal costs.

Evidence about the general community's knowledge of the individual Project Crossroad schools implies that familiarity with a school increases the likelihood of enrolling in that school. This process may explain part of the reason why living close to a school increases the likelihood of enrolling; youth in the immediate locality are most familiar with that school and know most about it. However, evidence from the community samples indicates that those schools that are most known generally in the region are the ones that draw a larger percentage of their student body from outside the immediate locality. NCTI-Wausau, the school best known in the region, draws only 31% of its student body from the

local city, whereas UW-Wausau, known best by only 7.1% of the high school graduates sampled, draws twice the percentage of its students, 62%, from the local city. Thus, proximity to a school and familiarity with a school appear to be two interrelated factors that increase the likelihood of enrolling in one of the Project Crossroad schools.

PART 3

THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Part 3 of this report focuses on what happens to students once they enroll in a postsecondary school. In particular, this section looks at some of the factors that may influence an individual's decision to remain in school until graduation or completion of his course work. The student's preparation for education, his evaluation of the education he is receiving, and the amount of direct and indirect support he receives from the school are investigated as factors that may influence this decision.

Two kinds of comparisons are made in this investigation. First, comparisons of present students with former students may suggest the factors that may differentiate between people who decide to stay in school and people who terminate their education prior to completion. Second, comparisons of present students who are relatively advantaged with present students who are relatively disadvantaged may suggest areas of preparation and educational experience where the disadvantaged have special need or difficulty. This latter comparison is asking whether the educational experience of disadvantaged students is different from that of more advantaged students.

From the samples of present students, the subsample of disadvantaged students was composed of people who met either of two criteria: either (1) they stated that their parental family income was less than $4000, or (2) they rated themselves as being disadvantaged — that is, in answer to the question "To what extent do you come from a disadvantaged home or background?", they answered a 5, 6, or 7, with 7 indicating "very much." The category of disadvantaged, then, is disjunctive, including both people who had low family incomes and people who rated themselves as disadvantaged. According to these criteria, approximately 20% of the present students were classified as disadvantaged.

EDUCATIONAL SKILLS AND PREPARATORY TRAINING

A student's preparation for postsecondary education may have an important influence on his educational progress, as well as his experience and evaluation of education. At one level, preparation for further education may be conceived of as obtaining and mastering the skills and knowledge that allow for more advanced work to be done easily and competently. Here, grade point

TABLE 10

PREPARATION FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Characteristic	Present Students										Former Students	Community Youth		
	UW-Wausau		UW-Medford		Nicolet College		NCTI-Wausau		NCTI-Ant.		All Former students	High School Graduates	Disadvantaged	Indian
	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D				
To what extent did your high school prepare you for postsecondary education?[1]	4.52	5.35	4.28	4.46	4.45	4.38	4.34	4.24	3.94	3.42	4.10	4.69	4.32	4.63
After high school, how well prepared did you feel to enter a job?[1]	3.[illegible]	3.22	3.70	3.46	3.34	3.09	3.33	3.19	3.41	3.35	4.11	4.65	4.18	4.74
Mean High School G.P.A.[2]	3.1	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.8	2.7	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.9	2.6	2.2
Mean Postsecondary G.P.A.[2]	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.6	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.6	2.4	—	—	—

Note: "A" column indicates mean answers for advantaged students, "D" column indicates mean answers for disadvantaged students.

1 Mean responses on a 7-point scale where 1 = Not at all prepared and 7 = Very well prepared.

2 "Four" point grading system, where 4 = A, 3 = B, 2 = C, 1 = D, and 0 = F.

averages may be taken as an indication of the extent to which educational skills have been demonstrated. But, at another level, the subjective feeling of preparedness is also important. Perhaps, this aspect deals more with the self concept of the student as one who is able and prepared to enter and complete postsecondary education.

Both the level of performance (as indicated by high school and postsecondary grades) and the perception of preparedness were investigated in all of the samples studied. Thus, various comparisons allow assessment of whether (1) present students are more prepared than community youth, (2) present students are more prepared than former students, and (3) advantaged students are more prepared than disadvantaged students.

(1) *Perception of preparedness for postsecondary education.* All of the samples were asked to rate the extent to which they thought their high school education prepared them for postsecondary education. The answers to this question indicate the perceived preparedness for further education. The mean response for each of the samples is presented in Table 10 (Preparation for Postsecondary Education).

Inspection of Table 10 indicates that all samples feel moderately well prepared, on the average, for postsecondary education. Perhaps students at NCTI-Antigo feel slightly less prepared, but the difference is not great. Community youth perceive the same level of preparedness as do present students. Former students also feel equally prepared. There are very few differences between present students who are disadvantaged and those who are advantaged. Only at UW-Wausau is there a difference; disadvantaged students rate themselves as slightly more prepared for postsecondary education than do their more advantaged counterparts. Since the grade point averages, both high school and postsecondary work, are not different for these two subsamples, it appears that this difference is more perceived than actual (to the extent that grades reflect actual preparedness). Perhaps a disadvantaged person had to feel especially prepared before he will decide to enroll in UW-Wausau. However, the interpretation is not clear, since the relationship could also occur if disadvantaged students at UW-Wausau came to see themselves as better prepared as a consequence of entering UW-Wausau.

A second question, also dealing with feelings of preparedness, was asked each of the samples. This question, however, dealt with the extent to which the various samples felt prepared to enter a job. In a sense, this question deals with the felt preparedness for

the major alternative to continuing education. In the responses to this question (also presented in Table 10), some interesting differences between the samples were found.

Generally, present students at each of the schools felt *less* prepared for a job than did the community youth or the former students. Both the samples of community youth and the sample of former students felt equally prepared for a job and for postsecondary education. The present students, however, felt significantly less prepared for a job than they did for postsecondary education. Several interpretations of this finding are possible. On the one hand, present students may, upon attending school, come to realize that they were less well prepared for a job than they had previously thought. On the other hand, it is also possible that present students come from members of the population who feel less qualified for a job. That is, a felt lack of preparation for a job may be one of the factors that influences a person to seek further education. This felt lack of preparation could reflect a number of things, such as higher occupational aspirations or the lack of a vocational emphasis in high school.

There is some support for the interpretation that present students come from among the high school graduates who feel less well prepared for a job. When the sample of High School graduates is subdivided into those who plan to attend a postsecondary school and those who do not, the same pattern of answers occurs. For high school graduates who do not plan on attending school, their rated preparation for a job ($\bar{X}$ = 5.11) is higher than their rated preparation for postsecondary education ($\bar{X}$ = 4.52). Whereas, for those who do plan on further education, their rated preparation for a job ($\bar{X}$ = 4.44) is lower than their rated preparation for postsecondary education ($\bar{X}$ = 4.77). Thus, among high school graduates, those who plan on further education also feel less well prepared for a job.

Former students also feel somewhat more prepared for a job than do the present students. While is is possible that terminating students are those that see jobs as a viable alternative, one that they have the preparation for, it is also possible that their former student status has necessitated a reassessment of their preparedness for a job. Within the samples of present students, there are no apparent differences between advantaged and disadvantaged students in the felt preparedness for a job. Nor are there any major differences between the five schools.

(2) *Grade point averages as an indication of preparedness.* The high school grade point averages were requested from each of the

samples surveyed. In addition, present students and former students were asked for their postsecondary grade point average. The means of these reported G.P.A.'s are presented in Table 10.

Within the samples of present students, there is s ariation in High School G.P.A. by school. UW-Wausau stud ave the highest and NCTI-Antigo students have the lowest High School G.P.A. The postsecondary G.P.A.'s are more equivalent. Again, there are no differences between advantaged and disadvantaged present students in either high school or postsecondary G.P.A.

Former students, as compared to present students, tend to have slightly lower high school G.P.A.'s, suggesting that there is a relationship (though small) between high school performance and graduation from postsecondary school. The postsecondary G.P.A. of former students is also below the average of the present students.

Within the community youth, the high school G.P.A.s are divergent. High school graduates have a relatively high average G.P.A., equal to the present students. The disadvantaged youth have a slightly lower average G.P.A., but one that is still similar to the present students. The Indian youth, on the other hand, have a G.P.A. that is lower than the average at each of the schools and only similar, perhaps, to NCTI-Antigo students. These findings indicate that the Indian youth and, perhaps to some extent, the disadvantaged youth did more poorly in high school than did the present students. The sample of high school graduates, however, is comparable to the present students.

(3) *Summary.* The findings discussed in this section reveal some differences between present students and community youth. Of particular interest is the fact that present students feel less prepared for a job than do the community youth, although both groups feel equally prepared for postsecondary education. This finding, however, relates more to the decision to enroll in school than it does to the issue of what happens once students enter school. Comparisons of present students who are disadvantaged with those who are advantaged generally revealed little difference. The high school and postsecondary grade point averages and the levels of perceived preparedness are similar. Although some differences between schools were observed, within schools the levels of preparedness were similar for advantaged and disadvantaged present students.

NON-EDUCATIONAL TIME DEMANDS

Although the time a person spends on his studies may not be the most important determinant of performance in postsecondary school, the ease of continuing education and the quality of education may be lessened if there are major non-educational demands on a person's time. The amount of time a person has to spend supporting his living and educational expenses may detract from his educational experience, making it harder to go to school and more difficult to remain through completion. Present and former students were asked several questions directly and indirectly dealing with non-educational demands on time.

(1) *Ease of going to school.* Present and former students were asked a general question concerning how easy it was for them to go to school. Their mean answers are presented in Table 11 (Non-educational Time Demands). Higher averages indicate greater ease of attending school. Except for students at UW-Medford, disadvantaged students tend to rate school attendance as slightly more difficult than do advantaged students. The difference, however, is not large. Former students, answering retrospectively, indicate a level of difficulty in attending school that is roughly comparable to the advantaged students at each of the schools. Although these answers, coming after the former students had left school, may not be comparable. It may be that the ease or difficulty of attending school is not related to the decision to withdraw from school.

(2) *Present employment.* Present and former students were asked two kinds of questions assessing the amount of time and importance of working while going to school. Students were asked to indicate how many hours per week they worked during the semester and were asked to rate the importance of various sources of funds, including present employment. These data are summarized in Table 11.

UW-Wausau. A slightly higher percentage of disadvantaged than advantaged students work 20 hours or more per week, although generally the number of students who work 20 hours or more per week is lower at UW-Wausau than at other schools. For disadvantaged students, present employment ranks along with summer employment as the most important source of funds for school. For advantaged students, present employment ranks third behind parental support and summer employment. It is interesting to note that savings and parental support are more important sources of funds for the advantaged students than for the dis-

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TABLE 11
NON-EDUCATIONAL TIME DEMANDS

	Present Students										Former Students
	UW-Wausau		UW-Medford		Nicolet College		NCTI-Wausau		NCTI-Antigo		
	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	
Considering everything, how easy is it for you to go to school?2	4.49	4.04	4.42	4.46	4.28	3.69	4.55	4.18	4.69	4.31	4.51
Percent of students working 20 hours or more per week.	16.8	25.9	30.0	23.1	36.7	22.9	31.3	34.5	35.3	7.6	19.9
Rated importance of sources of funds:3											
Present employment	3.73	3.91	3.12	3.31	4.05	3.18	3.93	3.72	2.73	2.25	3.78
Summer employment	4.11	3.91	4.18	3.92	3.46	3.46	4.18	4.11	3.38	1.83	3.87
Savings	3.57	2.22	3.85	2.69	2.99	2.96	3.54	3.31	2.78	2.48	3.26
Loans	2.19	3.24	2.41	2.00	1.67	2.11	2.08	2.30	1.53	1.92	2.22
Scholarships	1.94	2.38	2.41	2.08	1.63	1.78	1.47	1.66	1.64	2.17	1.46
Parents	4.41	3.04	3.00	3.00	3.36	2.79	3.88	3.15	2.82	2.28	4.43
Number of responses	107	23	40	13	109	35	505	130	51	26	55

Note - "A" indicates advantaged students, "D" indicates disadvantaged students.

1 Former student answers concern the period of time they were in school.

2 Mean answers on a 7-point scale, where "1" = Extremely difficult, and "7" = Extremely easy.

3 Mean answers on a 7-point scale, where "1" = Not at all important, and "7" = Extremely important.

advantaged students, while loans are more important for the disadvantaged than advantaged students.

UW-Medford. Advantaged and disadvantaged students at UW-Medford are very similar in the percentage of students who work 20 hours a week or more and in the rated importance of present employment as a source of funds. Savings are a more important source of funds for advantaged students than disadvantaged. Some differences between schools can be noted. For instance, parents as a source of funds are rated as less important for advantaged UW-Medford students than they are for advantaged UW-Wausau students.

Nicolet College. Slightly more of the advantaged students than disadvantaged students work 20 hours per week or more and they rate present employment as a more important source of funds. It appears that the disadvantaged students at Nicolet College generally rate all sources of funds except loans as less important than do their advantaged counterparts. Again, parents are a more important source of funds for the advantaged students than for the disadvantaged.

NCTI-Wausau. In comparison to the other schools, there are very few differences between advantaged and disadvantaged students at NCTI-Wausau. Equal percentages work while going to school and, generally, the sources of funds are given similar ratings. Parental funds provide the only exception to this generalization; advantaged students rate parents as a slightly more important source of funds than do disadvantaged students.

NCTI-Antigo. A very low percentage of the disadvantaged students at NCTI-Antigo worked more than 20 hours per week. However, the ratings of the importance of present employment was only slightly lower for disadvantaged students than for advantaged students. In contrast to the other schools, there was a large difference in the importance of summer employment as a source of funds; summer employment was a more important source of funds for advantaged students than for disadvantaged. Ratings of the other sources of funds were generally similar for the two groups.

Former students. In anything, slightly fewer of the former students than present students worked as much as 20 hours a week while they were going to school. However, the importance of present employment as a source of funds was rated as high among former students as it was among present students. Parents as a source of funds appears to be slightly more important for the former students than for the present students taken as a group.

Potentially, this might be an important finding in that relying on parental funds to a greater extent may have placed the former students in a conflict situation: their attendance at school may have placed an economic burden on their parents (and also may have placed them in more of a dependent position). One way to eliminate this conflict would be to withdraw from school. While this interpretation is possible, it is conjecture and requires corroboration for acceptance.

Summary. There are some fairly wide differences between schools in the percentage of students who work 20 hours or more and in the rated importance of various sources of funds. There is also very little consistency across schools in the ratings given by advantaged and disadvantaged students. Even when some consistency begins to appear such as advantaged students tending to rate savings as more important and disadvantaged students tending to rate loans as more important, there is still at least one school where the relationship is reversed.

Generally, it appears that disadvantaged students are not required to spend a great deal more time than advantaged students earning money to pay for their education and expenses. Only at UW-Wausau did a much larger percentage of disadvantaged students than advantaged students work. In the ratings of how easy it is to go to school, there is a slight trend across schools for disadvantaged students to say that it is more difficult to attend school. This is particularly true of students at Nicolet College, but not true of students at UW-Medford. The patterns of results suggest that the difficulty involved in going to school is not particularly related to the amount of time students spend working in jobs. Other factors appear to have contributed to student's ratings of the ease of going to school.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT

Another set of factors that may influence a students progress through postsecondary school and influence the quality of his educational experience is the amount and quality of support he receives from the educational institution. Support, as used in this section, refers to two related aspects of the institution's interaction with the student: (1) the amount of attention and help the student feels he is getting from the faculty and administration, and (2) the quality and availability of the services—academic, personal, and social—that the school provides for the student.

(1) *Support from faculty and administration.* The samples of

present students and former students were asked to respond to two general questions; one asking how much attention, help and support they received from the school's administration, the other asking how much attention, help and support they received from the school's faculty. These questions were purposely vague about the kinds of interactions students were to consider in making these ratings; these questions were intended to reveal a generalized response to the administration and faculty of the schools. The mean responses to these questions are presented in Table 12 (Institutional Support).

Inspection of the responses indicates a fairly consistent difference between the ratings given to administration and the ratings given to faculty. The faculties in every case were seen as being more attentive, helpful and supportive than were the administrations. This, of course, is not surprising given the different functions of these two positions. However, there are fairly wide differences between schools in the ratings given to the administration. NCTI-Antigo, UW-Medford, and Nicolet College received comparatively high ratings and UW-Wausau received comparatively low ratings of the amount of support from the administration. It appears that these ratings, at least to some extent, may be related to the size of the school; smaller schools tend to receive higher ratings. The ratings of support from the faculty were less variable and in every case higher than the ratings given the administration. These facts lead to differences among schools in the discrepancy between support received from faculty and support received from administration. At NCTI-Antigo and UW-Medford there is some difference, but not a large one, between faculty support and administrative support; while at UW-Wausau the difference is quite large.

The sample of former students is not particularly different in its pattern of ratings of faculty and administrative support. Apparently, the former students felt they had received as much support from the faculty and administration as do the present students. There are also no major differences between advantaged students and disadvantaged students at each of the schools. Generally, disadvantaged students feel as supported by the faculty and administration as do the advantaged students.

(2) *Quality of services.* Present and former students were asked to rate the quality of seven auxiliary services usually provided by the postsecondary school: academic advising, personal counseling, financial aids, extracurricular activities, student housing, health services, and developmental (remedial) education. The ratings on a

TABLE 12

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

	Present Students										Former Students
	UW-Wausau		UW-Medford		Nicolet College		NCTI-Wausau		NCTI-Antigo		
	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	
In general, how much attention, help, and support do you get from the school's administration?1	2.95	2.91	4.70	4.31	4.02	4.37	3.24	3.32	4.35	4.88	3.98
How much attention, help, and support do you get from the school's faculty?1	4.65	4.65	5.32	4.92	5.11	5.12	4.42	4.33	4.90	5.35	4.98
How would you rate these services?2											
Academic advising	3.44	3.17	4.90	4.85	4.45	4.43	4.31	4.23	4.04	3.15	4.87
Personal counseling	3.25	3.32	5.13	4.85	4.48	4.58	4.16	4.36	4.24	3.65	4.54
Financial aids	3.62	3.90	4.79	5.00	4.72	4.90	4.49	4.95	4.20	5.23	4.62
Extracurricular activities	3.78	4.00	4.26	4.54	3.50	4.03	4.21	4.38	2.55	2.50	3.98
Student housing	4.43	4.05	4.42	3.77	2.14	2.48	3.47	3.36	2.58	2.69	4.20
Health services	3.01	2.75	3.11	2.85	2.63	2.62	3.02	3.26	2.91	2.26	3.91
Remedial education	3.62	3.70	3.16	3.69	4.21	4.68	3.86	3.96	3.93	3.96	5.04
Percent of students using these services:											
Academic advising	83.2	91.3	92.5	92.3	81.7	82.9	76.7	80.0	68.6	42.3	92.7
Personal counseling	57.0	78.2	82.5	76.9	74.2	71.4	68.6	69.2	66.6	57.7	72.7
Financial aids	33.6	56.5	55.0	61.6	31.2	54.3	35.3	58.5	47.1	53.8	38.2
Extracurricular activities	57.9	56.5	80.0	84.7	38.6	28.6	67.1	72.3	47.0	50.0	48.2
Student housing	14.0	34.8	45.0	46.2	12.9	20.0	26.9	39.3	7.8	26.9	25.5
Health services	9.3	17.4	17.5	15.4	11.0	8.6	8.7	16.9	9.8	19.2	7.3
Remedial education	22.5	17.4	25.0	23.1	30.2	31.4	18.0	20.8	31.4	42.3	38.2
Number of responses	107	23	40	13	109	35	505	130	51	26	55

Note: "A" indicates advantaged students, "D" indicates disadvantaged students.
1 Mean answers on a 7-point scale where "1" = None at all, and "7" = A great deal.
2 Mean answers on a 7-point scale where "1" = Bad, and "7" = Good.

7-point scale where "1" indicates "bad" and "7" indicates "good" reflect the students' evaluation of these services. The mean ratings are presented in Table 12.

Again, there are some fairly large variations among schools in the rated quality of these services. For instance, Academic advising and personal counseling are given comparatively high ratings at UW-Medford and comparatively low ratings at UW-Wausau; Remedial education is rated slightly higher at Nicolet College than at the other schools; and student housing is evaluated lower at Nicolet College and NCTI-Antigo.

When comparing disadvantaged students to advantaged students, very few differences emerge. Only at NCTI-Antigo do moderate differences emerge: advantaged students evaluate academic advising more positively than do disadvantaged students, while disadvantaged students evaluate financial aids more positively than do advantaged students. Generally, the evaluations of the disadvantaged students at each of the schools are quite comparable to the evaluations of the advantaged students. When the former students are compared to the present students as a group, one difference is noticeable. Former students evaluate remedial education more positively than do the present students.

(3) *Use of services.* Present and former students were asked if they had ever used the services described above. Inspection of correlations within each school between evaluation and frequency of use (not presented here) suggests that, except for academic advising which is used by almost everybody, there is a fairly substantial direct relationship between evaluation of a service and extent of its use. Table 12 presents the percentages of students who stated that they had used the services occasionally or frequently. As with the evaluation of services, there are some fairly wide differences among schools in the extent to which a service is used.

When disadvantaged students are compared to advantaged students, several differences appear. As would be expected, disadvantaged students make more use of financial aids in each of the schools. However, at UW-Medford and NCTI-Antigo, almost as many advantaged students as disadvantaged students use the financial aid service. Except for NCTI-Antigo, both advantaged and disadvantaged students are similar in their use of academic advising. At NCTI-Antigo, fewer of the disadvantaged students have used the academic advising service. Personal counseling services are also about equally used by advantaged and disadvantaged students, except at UW-Wausau where the dis-

advantaged students make greater use of the service. Use of extra-curricular activities, health services, and remedial education is also similar for advantaged and disadvantaged students. However, student housing tends to be used more by disadvantaged students, especially at UW-Wausau and NCTI-Antigo.

When former students are compared to the present students as a whole, it appears that a slightly larger percentage of former students used the remedial education services. This information, coupled with the finding above that former students evaluate remedial education more highly, suggests that the former students may have had difficulties in doing postsecondary work. Their greater use and greater appreciation of remedial education suggests that the former students found it more needed and more useful than the average present student does. This conclusion is consistent with the finding in a prior section that the former students tended to have high school grade-point averages that were slightly lower than the average of the present students.

As a whole, these findings suggest that former students do tend to seek remedial education and to positively evaluate their experience sometime prior to terminating their studies. Since remedial education is appreciated by the former students, it seems likely that this service may play an important role in retaining students who are potential drop-outs. Further data is needed to verify this supposition; the present data only indicate that for former students, remedial education services were more used and more positively evaluated by students who did terminate their education before graduation.

EVALUATION OF THE QUALITY AND USEFULNESS OF EDUCATION

A student's evaluation of the quality and usefulness of his education is in part dependent upon the factors discussed in earlier sections of Part 3, and in part a separate and more encompassing factor dealing with the conjunction of his aspirations and experience. It is difficult to determine whether the data discussed in this section should be considered as a criterion variable, substituting for graduation, or as an independent variable that affects the likelihood of graduation. It is intermediate in the sense that other factors influence a student's evaluation of his education and that this evaluation may be related fairly directly to whether or not the student graduates from school. In this section, four aspects of the

students' evaluations of education are inspected: (1) satisfaction with educational progress, (2) relevance of education, (3) evaluation of the school, and (4) number of changes recommended in their school. Each of these issues can be inspected for the general level of evaluation and for differences among advantaged and disadvantaged students and among present students and former students.

(1) *Satisfaction with education progress.* Present and former students were asked a question concerning how well they were doing in school. This question assesses in a general way how satisfied the student is with his progress through school. The mean responses to this question are presented in Table 13 (Evaluation of Education). Among the present students at each of the schools, there are no major differences between advantaged and disadvantaged students. Generally, the present students appear to be fairly satisfied with their educational progress; the average responses indicate that the students feel they are doing moderately well in school. The former students, however, had a mean rating that was slightly lower than the present students' mean, although it was still on the "doing well" side of the scale. It does appear that the former students were those who were doing less well than the average present student. This finding tends to confirm the statement made above that satisfaction with education and educational progress is related to the decision to remain in school until graduation.

(2) *Relevance of education.* Present and former students at each of the schools were asked to rate the extent to which the school offers the kind of education they wanted. The responses, on a scale from "Not at all" to "Very much," fall at or above the midpoint of the scale, indicating that in general students are fairly well satisfied with their education and its relevance to their desires. There are, however, some differences among the schools. It appears that there is a trend for students at the vocational-technical schools to rate educational relevance slightly higher than do the students at the UW centers. In two cases there are also differences between advantaged and disadvantaged students. At UW-Medford and NCTI-Antigo, the disadvantaged students rate educational relevance lower than do the advantaged students. Since in both cases the disadvantaged students stated that they were doing as well as the advantaged students, this difference in the rated relevance of education may be a function of difference expectations and aspirations on the part of the disadvantaged students. That is, they could desire a different kind of education,

TABLE 13

EVALUATION OF EDUCATION

	Present Students										Former Students
	UW-Wausau		UW-Medford		Nicolet College		NCTI-Wausau		NCTI-Antigo		
	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	
How well are you doing in school?[1]	4.90	4.87	4.58	4.77	5.29	5.11	5.14	4.98	5.47	5.04	4.36
To what extent does this school offer the education you want?[2]	4.79	4.57	4.55	3.92	4.77	5.11	5.17	5.09	5.53	4.15	4.55
How would you evaluate this school?[3]	5.29	5.43	5.30	4.00	5.38	5.31	5.03	4.87	5.25	5.04	4.56
Number of recommended changes in the school.	1.2	1.3	1.5	1.5	0.9	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.7	1.3	—
Number of advantages of postsecondary education listed.	2.2	1.5	2.3	2.7	1.7	1.3	1.8	1.8	2.0	2.0	—
Number of disadvantages of postsecondary education listed.	1.5	0.8	1.2	0.9	1.3	0.5	1.2	1.1	2.8	2.5	—
Number of responses	107	23	40	13	109	35	505	130	51	26	55
Percentage of school sample	82.3	17.7	75.5	24.5	75.7	24.3	79.5	20.5	66.2	33.8	100

Note - "A" indicates advantaged students, "D" indicates disadvantaged students.

1 Mean answers on a 7-point scale where "1" = Extremely poorly and "7" = Extremely well.

2 Mean answers on a 7-point scale where "1" = Not at all and "7" = Very much.

3 Mean answers on a 7-point scale where "1" = Extremely bad and "7" = Extremely good.

but because of their lack of financial resources be unable to afford the choice of a different education. Former students also show a slight trend toward rating the relevance of education as lower than the present students. (This trend is more apparent when the former students from each school are compared to the present students at that school.) This finding would suggest that believing the education is relevant to one's desires is related to the decision to remain in school.

(3) *Evaluation of the school.* Present and former students were asked to evaluate their school on a 7-point "Bad" to "Good" scale. Each of the schools receive a rating that is quite positive, indicating that the schools are seen as well within the "good" range. Except at UW-Medford, the advantaged and disadvantaged students tend to rate the school similarly. At UW-Medford, however, the disadvantaged students rate the school much lower (at the dividing line between good and bad) than do the advantaged students. Although the sample of disadvantaged students is quite small at UW-Medford (n = 13), this large difference suggests that disadvantaged students feel differently, and more negatively, about the school than do the advantaged students. Again, former students tend to evaluate their school slightly less positively than do the present students.

(4) *Number of changes recommended in the school.* Present students at each of the schools were asked several open-ended questions where they could list whatever responses they desired. These questions asked them to state the advantages of a postsecondary education, the disadvantages of a postsecondary education, and to recommend changes in the school. The number of responses each student made were counted. The average number of responses to each question are presented in Table 13. There was a large variability within each sample in the number of responses listed, probably owing more to fatigue in filling out the questionnaire and to verbosity of the student than to evaluation of the educational experience. Consequently, there are no major differences between schools or between advantaged and disadvantaged students within a school in any of these three question.

(5) *Summary.* The fairly consistent differences between present and former students in the satisfaction with educational progress, relevance of education, and evaluation of the school suggests that former students do evaluate their educational experience less positively than do the present students. While part of this difference may reflect a "sour grapes" effect in that former students lowered their evaluation of education subsequent to withdrawing,

it is probably, or likely, that this evaluation was initiated and developed prior to their withdrawal and was, in part, contributory to the withdrawal. If these more negative evaluations on the part of the former students did originate prior to withdrawal, these findings lead to a conclusion that is already well known by educational counselors: to decrease the dropout rate, you work with students who feel that they are not doing well, feel that their education is not particularly relevant, and who don't like the school.

The differences between advantaged and disadvantaged students reflect differences between schools more than they reflect on the general experience of disadvantaged students. At UW-Wausau, Nicolet College, and NCTI-Wausau, the disadvantaged students evaluate their educational experience just as the advantaged students do. Differences, however, were observed at UW-Medford and NCTI-Antigo; in both cases the disadvantaged students tended to have lower evaluations of their educational experience than did the advantaged students.

SUMMARY: THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Part 3 has focused on the kinds of experience students have in postsecondary school and, in particular, the factors that make for an easier, more profitable experience. Two major comparisons have been made throughout this part of the report: (1) the comparison of the experience of former students to the experience of present students, and (2) the comparison of the experience of advantaged students to the experience of disadvantaged students. The first sort of comparison provides information about the factors that affect the decision to remain in school. Major differences between present students and former students suggest the kinds of experiences and evaluations that are related to continuing or dropping out of postsecondary school. The second sort of comparison relates more directly to the question of whether the existing postsecondary schools are serving the educational needs of the disadvantaged students who attend. In part, differences between the experiences and evaluations of advantaged and disadvantaged students could result from differences in needs and desires of the student or from differences in treatment.

(1) *The decision to remain in school or withdraw.* From the comparisons between present students and former students, several factors emerge as differentiating between students who

have terminated their education and those who remain in school. Former students tend to have a lower evaluation of education: they were less satisfied with their educational progress, saw the education they received as less relevant to their desires, and gave a less positive evaluation of their school. Although these lower evaluations could have occurred after and as a result of leaving school (as a "sour grapes" effect), it is more likely that these reactions began prior and may have contributed to leaving school.

While former students rated themselves as prepared as did present students for postsecondary education, the former students felt more prepared than did present students for a job. While it is also possible that former student altered their judgments subsequent to terminating their education, this does not appear to be the case. Former students did not have lower estimates of their preparedness for postsecondary education, while they did have higher estimates of their preparedness for a job. Perhaps the students who terminate their education are those who feel that they have an alternative in that they see themselves as moderately well prepared for a job. The present students by contrast saw themselves as not particularly well prepared for a job.

While the former students felt that their high schools did prepare them for postsecondary school, their high school grade point averages suggest that they received lower grades than most of the present students. They also received lower grades in postsecondary school than did the present students. This last finding is not surprising since high school grades tend to have a fairly substantial correlation to postsecondary grades. These findings suggest that former students tend to come from among the less well prepared students and from among the students who performed below the average in postsecondary school. Corroborating this conclusion is the finding that a higher percentage of former students than present students made use of the remedial education programs. The former students also appreciated the remedial education programs more than did the present students.

The former students apparently had no more difficulty attending school than did the present students. They said that it was just as easy for them to go to school as did the present students and, if anything, fewer of the former students worked half-time or more. It appears that the former students were not "driven out" of schools by excessive non-educational time demands. Former students did differ from present students in the importance they placed on parents as a source of funds. Former students relied more heavily on parents for funds. This unexpected finding is

open to a variety of interpretations. For instance, it is possible that students who rely on parental funds and find themselves doing relatively poorly in postsecondary school may be placed in greater conflict about attending school - "Not only am I wasting my time, but their money!" - feelings which can be at least partially resolved by leaving school.

Clearly, there is no one reason why a person decides to leave school; but the present study points to some of the factors that may be related to some of the decisions to terminate a postsecondary education before graduation. Lower than average high school grades, lower than average postsecondary grades, use of remedial education services, and a lower than average evaluation of the school and the quality of education emerge from the present study as characteristics of the former student in comparison to the present student.

(2) *The educational experience of advantaged and disadvantaged students.* The present students at each of the schools were subdivided into samples of advantaged and disadvantaged students. In each case the disadvantaged samples were composed of students who stated they had a mean family income under $4000 or who rated themselves as being more than moderately disadvantaged. From the data reported in Part 3, the educational experience and evaluations of disadvantaged students were generally similar to that of the advantaged students. In fact, the only general difference that tended to be true for all schools was that disadvantaged students were more likely to use financial aids.

A student's educational experience, of course, is highly dependent upon the programs, climate, and character of the school he attends. And the data tabled in Part 3 reveal some of the student perceptions relating to these qualities of the Project Crossroad schools. When the educational experiences and evaluations are inspected on a school by school basis, some differences between the schools are noted. At UW-Wausau, Nicolet College, and NCTI-Wausau, the perceptions and evaluations of disadvantaged students are virtually the same as for the advantaged students. At UW-Medford and NCTI-Antigo, however, differences between advantaged and disadvantaged students were found.

At UW-Medford, the disadvantaged students had lower evaluations than advantaged students of the school and of the relevance of the education they were receiving. There were, however, no other major differences between advantaged and disadvantaged students. Disadvantaged students at UW-Medford are equally prepared for postsecondary school, use and evaluate the school's

services equally, and have equal non-educational time demands to the advantaged students. This pattern of findings tends to suggest that disadvantaged students are sharing the same educational experience as the advantaged students but evaluating it differently. Perhaps something in the self-perception, desires, or aspirations of the disadvantaged students leads to this difference.

The students at NCTI-Antigo present a pattern of responses, particularly in the differences between advantaged and disadvantaged students, that is different from the other schools. Disadvantaged students tend to have a slightly lower evaluation of the school and the relevance of their education, but they also differ from the advantaged students in a number of other ways. The disadvantaged students tend to have slightly lower postsecondary grade point averages and tend to rate their preparation for postsecondary education as slightly lower than do the advantaged students. These differences in preparation and performance indicate that the disadvantaged students at NCTI-Antigo tend to be educationally as well as financially disadvantaged. At the other schools, the disadvantaged students were equal in educational preparation and performance to the advantaged students. The data also indicate that NCTI-Antigo may be dealing with more disadvantaged students than the other schools. By the criteria used, over a third of the NCTI-Antigo students were classified as disadvantaged, while only seventeen to twenty-five percent of the students at other schools were classified as disadvantaged.

The educational experience of advantaged and disadvantaged students at NCTI-Antigo may also be different. Sixty-nine percent of the advantaged students but only forty-two percent of the disadvantaged students stated that they had ever used academic advising. This difference may represent the fact that disadvantaged students are in different sorts of programs than the advantaged students or that they are not availing themselves of this service as much as are the advantaged students. The disadvantaged students do feel that they receive as much, if not more, help and attention from both the administration and the faculty.

The educational experience of the disadvantaged student depends both upon the nature of the student and the character of the school he attends. At UW-Wausau, Nicolet College, and NCTI-Wausau, the disadvantaged students are similar to the advantaged students in preparation and performance and appear to have the same educational experience. At UW-Medford, the disadvantaged students are similar in preparation and performance, but have a lower evaluation of their education and the school. At NCTI-

Antigo, the disadvantaged students appear to be different in preparation and performance from the advantaged student and have a different educational experience; they receive less academic advising than the advantaged students and tend to see their education as less relevant to their needs than do the advantaged students.

APPENDIX A

SAMPLING PROCEDURES

I. Present Students.

Questionnaires designed for students enrolled in the participating institutions were administered during late April and early May of 1972. The sampling procedures varied from institution to institution as the time demands, characteristics of the institution, and desires of the Project board members necessitated particular procedures. Generally, the sample selection procedures were aimed at obtaining a representative cross-section of the student bodies, either through random selection procedures or the knowledge of someone very familiar with the student body. A sample size of at least fifty students was considered the minimum for statistical reliability. While this minimum was obtained in every case, the actual number of students surveyed varies from school to school as a function of the size of the student body and the desires of the school administrators. The following descriptions indicate how the samples for the Present Student Questionnaires were obtained at each of the schools.

A. *UW-Wausau.* From a catalog of spring course offerings, a random sample of ten classes was drawn. Project research assistants contacted the teachers of these classes, explained the nature of the project, and asked them to hand out the questionnaires during class time. Students then completed the questionnaires and returned them to the Student Affairs Office. One hundred and thirty completed questionnaires were returned. Thus, 19.3% of the 672 enrolled students were assessed.

B. *UW-Medford.* Because of the small student body and nearness to final exams, students enrolled in UW-Medford were contacted informally in the student lounge by a Project Research Assistant or the Student Affairs Director and asked to complete the questionnaire in that setting. Fifty-three questionnaires were obtained, representing 37.9% of the 140 students enrolled at UW-Medford.

C. *Nicolet College.* The Dean of Instruction selected four instructors who distributed the student questionnaires to students in all of their classes. Completed questionnaires were returned to the teacher or to the Project Crossroads-Wisconsin Office. One hundred and forty-five completed questionnaires were returned, representing 32.4% of the 448 students enrolled.

D. *NCTI-Wausau.* A member of the Project Board, who is also a member of the NCTI staff, assumed responsibility for distributing and collecting the questionnaires at NCTI-Wausau. Generally, questionnaires were completed and returned during class time. As complete a sampling of the student body as possible was desired. Six hundred and thirty-five questionnaires were completed, representing 64.4% of the 986 students enrolled.

E. *NCTI-Antigo.* A list of classes was randomly selected from the catalog of course offerings and a Project Research Assistant contacted the teachers and requested time to administer the questionnaire. The questionnaires were administered during class time by a Project Research Assistant. Seventy-Seven questionnaires were completed, representing 55.4% of the 139 students enrolled.

For the analyses in Part 3 of the report, each of these samples was further subdivided into groupings of advantaged students and disadvantaged students. For each sample of present students, the subsample of disadvantaged students was composed of people who met either of two criteria: either (1) they stated that their parental family income was less than $4000, or (2) they rated themselves as being disadvantaged — that is, in answer to the question, "To what extent do you come from a disadvantaged home or background?", they answered "5", "6", or "7", with "7" indicating "very much". The category of disadvantaged, then, is disjunctive, including both people who had low family incomes and people who rated themselves as disadvantaged. The advantaged present student subsamples were composed of all present students who were not classified as disadvantaged. According to these criteria, 17.7% of the US-Wausau students, 24.5% of the UW-Medford students, 24.3% of the Nicolet College students, 20.5% of the NCTI-Wausau students, and 33.8% of the NCTI-Antigo students were classified as disadvantaged.

II. Former Students.

A sample of former students was contacted during the summer of 1972 and asked to describe their educational experiences, aspirations, preparation, and their reasons for initially seeking and then discontinuing their education. The Present Student Questionnaire was adapted and expanded to cover the experiences of the former student. A former student was operationally defined as any full time student enrolled in one of the participating schools in the Fall of 1971 who withdrew from school, without graduating, at any time during the 1971-1972 school year.

At each institution, a 20% sample was drawn from the lists of

former students meeting the definition. At UW-Medford, however, the entire list of 15 former students was included. One hundred and seven names formed the list of former students to be contacted: 16 from UW-Wausau, 15 from UW-Medford, 30 from Nicolet College, and 46 from NCTI. Project Research Assistants and Interviewers attempted to contact these former students on the phone and make an appointment for an interview. These people were told that they had been selected to discuss ways of improving education in Northcentral Wisconsin; they were not informed that they had been selected because they had recently withdrawn from school.

Of the original 107 names sampled, 32 could not be located, 20 refused or provided incomplete interviews, and 55 provided complete and usable interviews. The completed interviews represent 51.4% of the original sample and 73.3% of the sample with whom contact was made. The corresponding data for individual schools are reported in Table 14.

TABLE 14

FORMER STUDENT RESPONSE RATE

Former School	Sample Size	Completed Interviews	Incomplete or Refusals	Could not Locate	% of Original Sample	% of Located Sample
UW-Wausau	16	9	4	3	56.2	69.2
UW-Medford	15	8	3	4	53.3	72.2
Nicolet Col.	30	11	5	14	36.7	68.8
NCTI	46	27	8	11	58.7	77.1
All	107	55	20	32	51.4	73.3

III. High School Graduates and Parents.

Interviews were also prepared for various community groups. In particular, a sample of "potential students" was sampled to compare with the present and former students. In addition, one parent of each potential student was interviewed. The student interviews concerned aspirations for further education, knowledge of the postsecondary institutions in the region, and perceptions of their preparation for postsecondary education. The parental interviews concerned knowledge about and perceptions of the various postsecondary schools as well as attitudes towards postsecondary education.

Dr. Courtney Schwertz, UW-Extension, and the Survey Research Laboratory, UW-Madison, assisted in identifying a sample of high school graduates in the Northcentral Wisconsin region. Ten high schools were randomly selected from among the more than thirty in the project area. Antigo High School was selected twice and, thus, represents two of the selections. For each of the selected schools, 10 students were randomly selected from among the list of 1972 graduates. In addition, a list of 10 alternate students was selected to be used in the event that members of the first list could not be located. For each of these students, one parent was selected to also be interviewed; for half, the mother was to be interviewed, for the other half, the father was to be interviewed.

From the 100 students and 100 alternates selected, 92 high school graduate and 94 high school parent interviews were completed. Eight of the families interviewed reported incomes below the poverty level and their interviews were moved to a group of interviews collected from disadvantaged parents and youth, which were analyzed separately. Thus, 84 high school graduates and 86 of their parents are included in the respective samples. In each case, initial contact was made over the phone and an appointment for an interview was made. A Project Research Assistant or an Interviewer conducted the interview with the student and parent in their home.

IV. Disadvantaged Youth and Parents.

Since this project is especially concerned with the educational needs and opportunities of the disadvantaged of Northcentral Wisconsin, a special effort was made to interview members of this particular segment of the population. The interviews, conducted with both youth and their parents, covered the same material as the High School Graduate and Parent interviews.

The disadvantaged families were difficult to identify and necessarily came from several different sources. Eight of the families from the High School Graduates and Parent sample were at or below the poverty level and were included in the sample of disadvantaged. In addition, 13 families in various parts of Price County were identified as being disadvantaged and interviewed. Most of these families were recipients of welfare and identified through the welfare rolls. Several other families in Price and Oneida Counties were selected because the appearance of their housing suggested that the family was economically disadvantaged. If, during the interview, their disadvantaged status was verified, they were retained. Of the 22 disadvantaged youth interviewed, 13

came from Price County, 4 from Oneida County, and 5 from Langlade County. Of the 25 disadvantaged parents, 16 came from Price County, 4 from Oneida County, and 5 from Langlade County.

The representation of youth and parents from specific high schools are presented in Table 15.

TABLE 15

HIGH SCHOOLS REPRESENTED IN SAMPLES OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

High School	Number of Youth	Number of Parents
Antigo	19	19
Athens	7	8
Edgar	8	8
Medford	8	8
Merrill	10	10
Minocqua	8	8
Phillips	9	9
Rhinelander	10	10
Wabeno	5	6
Total	84	86

V. Indian Youth and Parents.

Since Indians comprise another often disadvantaged segment of the population, a special effort was made to interview Indian youth and parents concerning their needs and desires for post-secondary education as well as their knowledge and perception of the schools in the region. The interview forms were the same as for the High School Graduate and Disadvantaged sample.

The interviewers, however, were Indian. A cohort of Indian interviewers were trained in interviewing techniques and use of the youth and parent interview forms. During the Summer of 1972, these interviewers worked in each of the reservations and major Indian populations in the Northcentral Wisconsin region. Contacts with respondents were made individually, through referrals, and

by knocking on doors. While the responses are analyzed for Indian youth and parents as a whole, these responses come from six different Indian tribes in the region. The number of responses from each tribe are presented in Table 16.

TABLE 16

TRIBES REPRESENTED IN INDIAN SAMPLES

Tribe	*Number of Youth*	*Number of Parents*
Stockbridge-Munsee	16	54
Lac du Flambeau - Chippewa	30	34
Mole Lake - Chippewa	6	3
Forest County Potawatami	2	10
Winnebago	6	8
Menominee	13	22
Total	73	131